

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the title on the cover page, page 1, and the last page as follows:

**~~APPARATUS, SYSTEM, AND METHOD FOR DEFINING A METADATA~~
~~SCHEMA TO FACILITATE PASSING DATA BETWEEN AN EXTENSIBLE~~
~~MARKUP LANGUAGE DOCUMENT AND A HIERARCHICAL DATABASE~~**

Please amend paragraph [0001] as follows:

[0001] The invention relates to database systems. Specifically, the invention relates to ~~apparatus, systems, and~~ methods for defining a metadata schema to facilitate passing data between an eXtensible Markup Language (XML) document and a hierarchical database.

Please amend paragraph [0013] as follows:

[0013] Accordingly, a need exists for ~~an apparatus, system, and a~~ method for defining a metadata schema to facilitate passing data between an XML document and a hierarchical database. The ~~apparatus, system, and~~ method should define a metadata schema that complies with an accepted, text-based, industry standard such that the learning curve is minimized. In addition, the ~~apparatus, system, and~~ method should define a metadata schema that serves a dual purpose, one to define a set of valid, well-formed XML documents that may be passed into and out of a hierarchical database, and two to facilitate mapping data from a source XML document into and out of a particular hierarchical database. Further the ~~apparatus, system, and~~ method should define a metadata schema that accommodates user-defined database views of the hierarchical database and is readily modifiable to adjust to changes in the user-defined database views.

Please amend paragraph [0014] as follows:

[0014] The present invention has been developed in response to the present state of the art, and in particular, in response to the problems and needs in the art that have not yet been met for passing data between an XML document and a hierarchical database. Accordingly, the present invention has been developed to provide ~~an apparatus, system,~~

~~and~~ a method for passing data between an XML document and a hierarchical database that overcomes many or all of the above-discussed shortcomings in the art.

Please amend paragraph [0032] as follows:

[0032] It will be readily understood that the components of the present invention, as generally described and illustrated in the figures herein, may be arranged and designed in a wide variety of different configurations. Thus, the following more detailed description of the embodiments of the ~~apparatus, system, and~~ method of the present invention, as presented in Figures 1 through 9, is not intended to limit the scope of the invention, as claimed, but is merely representative of selected embodiments of the invention.

Please amend paragraph [0134] as follows:

[0134] In summary, the present invention provides ~~an apparatus, system, and a~~ a method for defining a metadata schema to facilitate passing data between an XML document and a hierarchical database. The present invention defines a metadata schema that complies with an accepted, text-based, industry standard, an XML schema, for valid, well-formed, XML documents. The XML schema defines a set of valid, well-formed XML documents. This set is automatically the set of valid, well-formed XML documents that may be passed into and out of a hierarchical database through mapping of the data. The present invention also defines a metadata schema that accommodates user-defined database views of the hierarchical database and is readily modifiable to adjust to changes in the user-defined database views.

Please amend the Abstract as follows:

~~An apparatus, system, and~~ a method ~~are~~ is provided for defining a metadata schema to facilitate passing data between an XML document and a hierarchical database. The invention includes a database accessor, a document accessor, and an association module. The database accessor accesses a database schema indicative of database field names and a hierarchical structure for a hierarchical database. The document accessor accesses a

document schema that defines the hierarchical structure, content data syntax, and semantics of valid, well-formed, XML documents that can be passed into and out of the hierarchical database. The document schema also includes at least one XML element name that maps to a corresponding database field name in the database schema. The association module associates the database schema and the document schema to provide a metadata schema that enables data to be passed between an XML document and the hierarchical database.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows: